

amended by striking "3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act" and inserting "September 30, 2007".

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, first I would like to commend my colleagues on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Chairman YOUNG, Subcommittee Chairman SHUSTER and Subcommittee Democratic Ranking Member NORTON, for all of their work on this important bill. H.R. 4324, Predisaster Mitigation Act Reauthorization Act of 2005, provides funding for a competitive grant program to assist States and local governments in implementing cost-effective hazard mitigation activities that complement a comprehensive mitigation program.

The Predisaster Mitigation Grant Program (PDM) will provide funds to states, and local governments and communities for hazard mitigation planning and the implementation of mitigation projects prior to a disaster event. Funding these plans and projects reduces overall risks to the population and structures, while also reducing reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations. This program funds activities like, the seismic strengthening of buildings and infrastructure, the construction of levees and the building of "safe rooms" in houses and other structures to protect against high winds. It is important to note that this program complements another Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act post mitigation program—the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMPG) which provides fund to reduce the risk of future damage, hardship, loss or suffering in any area affected by a major disaster.

Over the last twenty-five years, this country has had over one thousand presidential disaster declarations in the United States and the Insular Territories. These disasters have cost our nation billions of dollars and taken an untold number of lives. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Rita and Wilma, we have all become acutely aware of the devastation natural disaster can bring. We know that these natural disasters will continue to occur and bring damage and destruction but we also know that mitigation programs like the Predisaster Mitigation Program will help save lives and property.

According to the Multihazard Mitigation Council of the National Institute of Building Sciences which conducted an independent study on the costs benefits of mitigation for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)—mitigation saves lives and tax dollars. For every \$1 spent from the United States Treasury for mitigation, we will save \$3.65 for taxpayers when disaster strikes. Mitigation reduces property damage, reduces business interruption, reduces environmental damage and most importantly, it reduces societal losses, including casualties and homelessness. Moreover, the benefits of FEMA hazard mitigation grants significantly exceed their costs—by a 4 to 1 margin. In addition to providing broad-based benefits to society, FEMA hazard mitigation grants more than pay for themselves. Mr. Speaker, it is unmistakably clear, mitigation is essential to reducing the loss of lives and property in future natural disasters.

In October 2000, Congress passed the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA), which reauthorized the Stafford Act and created several new programs. One of those new programs was a Predisaster Mitigation Program

that tasked FEMA with awarding grants to states on a competitive basis to implement predisaster mitigation plans. Again, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina as the Gulf Region begins the long and difficult process of rebuilding we can truly appreciate the importance of predisaster mitigation planning. Today, this bill extends the authorization of this program for another three years and directs the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to conduct a study on the program's effectiveness.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this is a good bill that will save both lives, property and taxpayer funds. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RESIGNATION AS CLERK OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, November 18, 2005.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I am writing to tender my resignation as Clerk effective upon the appointment of my successor November 18, 2005.

It has been an honor to serve this Institution, its people and the Nation for more than 20 years. I leave knowing the incredible ability of the people who serve here and their commitment to the people they represent.

I will especially depart with a deep sense of admiration and respect for the individuals working in and with the Office of the Clerk. I wish to thank them for their efforts over the last seven years during my tenure as Clerk of the House.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAHLL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted. There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT AS CLERK OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 208 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 75a-1), and the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment as Clerk of the House of Representatives Mrs. Karen L. Haas of Maryland.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, November 18, 2005.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Under Clause 2(g) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Rep-

resentatives, I herewith designate Mr. Gerasimos C. Vans, Deputy Clerk, to sign any and all papers and do all other acts for me under the name of the Clerk of the House which he would be authorized to do by virtue of this designation, except such as are provided by statute, in case of my temporary absence or disability.

If Mr. Vans should not be able to act in my behalf for any reason, then Ms. Marjorie C. Kelaher, Assistant to the Clerk, should similarly perform such duties under the same conditions as are authorized by this designation.

These designations shall remain in effect for the 109th Congress or until modified by me.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

APPOINTMENT OF HON. TOM DAVIS AND HON. FRANK R. WOLF TO ACT AS SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE TO SIGN ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS THROUGH DECEMBER 6, 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 18, 2005.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM DAVIS and the Honorable FRANK R. WOLF to act as Speaker pro tempore to sign enrolled bills and joint resolutions through December 6, 2005.

J. DENNIS HASTERT
Speaker of the House of Representatives

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the appointment is approved.

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHIEF OF STAFF OF HON. WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Nicole Venable, Chief of Staff of the Honorable WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
November 18, 2005.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a grand jury subpoena for documents issued by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

NICOLE VENABLE,
Chief of Staff.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2005

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday